# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
# LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:32
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2002
PM`S OVERSEAS TOURS
SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

(a) whether our Prime Minister visited USA and other countries recently;

(b) if so, the nature of talks and issues discussed by him with the Heads of each of those countries; (

(c) the outcome of talks/discussions, country-wise; and

(d) the points of disagreement which surfaced during the talks, country-wise ?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN PARTS (b) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 32 TO BE ANSWERE 20.11.2002 REGARDING `PM`S OVERSEAS TOURS`.

PM visited the following countries recently :

(i) The USA (10-15 September, 2002)

(ii) Cyprus (7-9 October, 2002)

(iii) Denmark (10-11 October, 2002)

(iv) The UK (12 October, 2002)

(v) Cambodia (4-6 November, 2002)

(vi) Laos (6-8 November, 2002)

(vii) Thailand (8 November, 2002)

Country-wise information in respect of parts (b) to (d) of the question is as follows :

USA

The Prime Minister visited New York from September 10-15, 2002 to attend the 57th Session of the UN General Assembly. During the visit, he met U.S. President George Bush on September 12 to discuss ways to further strengthen bilateral cooperation towards fulfilment of their shared commitment, articulated in their November 2001 meeting in Washington D.C.,to transform India-U.S. relations. They also discussed regional and international issues, including continuing cross-border terrorism from Pakistan and the evolving situation regarding Iraq.

The two leaders reviewed the progress in bilateral relations in the context of their November 2001 meeting in Washington DC. They noted, in particular, the positive developments in the areas of counter terrorism and defence cooperation. They reaffirmed their commitment to continue the process of qualitatively transforming Indo-Us relations to take full advantage of the changing international environment. They emphasized the deepening of the bilateral dialogue and the strengthening of the New Strategic Framework of relations. To that end, they agreed to explore possibilities of expanding cooperation in space, diverse forms of energy, high-technology commerce and science. President Bush also conveyed that the United States would continue to press President Musharraf to fulfil his commitments on cross-border terrorism against India.

Prime Minister expressed hope that efforts would be made to avoid war in Iraq. He conveyed that India has vital strategic interests in Gulf and a historical relationship with Iraq and that while we fully understand the international community`s desire to see the relevant UN resolutions on Weapons of Mass Destruction complied with fully, we believe that the sanctions against Iraq should be lifted in tandem with full and effective compliance by Iraq.

Cyprus

Prime Minister paid an official visit to Cyprus from 7-9th October 2002.

During the talks issues of bilateral, regional and international importance were discussed.

Cyprus reiterated its support for India`s candidature for a permanent seat in the expanded Security Council of the United Nations.Five important Agreements in the fields of Information Technology, Science & Technology, Culture, Health and Telecommunications were signed in the presence of Prime Minister and President Glafcos Clerides.

There were no points of disagreement during the talks.

Denmark

PM led the Indian delegation at the Third India-EU Summit held at Denmark from 10th-11th October 2002 and also had bilateral discussions with Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen on 11th October 2002.The EU was represented by the PM of Denmark, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen in his capacity as President of the European Council and President of the European Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi.Discussions at the Summit focused on review of bilateral relations with EU and regional and global issues of mutual interest. PM also gave a keynote address at the Special Plenary session of the Third India-EU Business Summit, which is an integral part of India-EU dialogue at the Summit level.

India and the EU adopted the Joint Press Statement along with an Agenda for Action.The Summit was highly successful. It recognized the importance of India & EU as global actors in a multi-polar world.The Joint Statement and Agenda for Action adopted at the Summit reiterated our shared commitment to expand and deepen India-EU cooperation in all areas on the basis of equality and mutual benefit and to further promote the development of our partnership.

The visit provided an opportunity to clarify our respective positions on matters of regional and global concern, and identify areas of bilateral cooperation in the future.

There were no points of disagreement on bilateral issues.

U.K.

Prime Minister visited the U.K. on 12 October 2002.

The meeting between PM and U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair was marked by warmth and cordiality. In addition to reviewing bilateral ties, both leaders had wide-ranging discussions on regional and global developments.

The U.K. Prime Minister congratulated PM on the successful elections in Jammu & Kashmir despite the violence. Bilateral issues were discussed in the context of the implementation of the New Delhi Declaration. Mr. Blair also reiterated support for India`s permanent membership of the UNSC.

There were no points of disagreement on bilateral issues.

Cambodia, Laos & Thailand

Prime Minister visited Cambodia from 4-6 November 2002, essentially to take part in the First ASEAN-India Summit held in Phnom Penh on 5 November, 2002, but also had bilateral discussions with Prime Minister of Cambodia;Laos on a bilateral official visit from 6-8 November 2002; and Thailand on transit halt on 8th November, 2002.

During the visits, the Prime Minister discussed with the leadership of these countries ways to enhance and strengthen our cooperation with them on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

The discussions have contributed to better understanding of each other`s perspectives and concerns, resulting in the signing of several important agreements, such as:-

With Cambodia:

- Trade Agreement;
- Credit Agreement for US $ 10 million to Cambodia;
- MoU between Archeological Survey of India and APSARA Authority for Preservation of Angkor Archeological Park; and
- A non-governmental agreement between IIT, Bombay and Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC).

With Laos:

- Agreement on Defence Cooperation.
- Agreement on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Matters.
- Agreement on Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports; and
- Agreement for Credit Line for US $ 10 million to Laos.

There were no points of disagreement during PM`s talks in these countries.